

SITUATION REPORT NO. 5

INCIDENT NO. 2002- 007

DATE: January 21, 2002

TIME: 4:30 p.m.

TO: Governor John Hoeven
State Capitol
Bismarck, N.D. 58505

1. NATURE OF DISASTER: Train Derailment – A large anhydrous ammonia plume enveloped significant portions of the Minot area.
2. DEATHS AND INJURIES: Local officials reported 320 people were treated at the Edison Elementary School aid station and Trinity Medical Center in Minot. To date, 13 people remain hospitalized, two of whom are in the hospital's intensive care unit.
3. DAMAGES: The derailment involved 31 cars. Of the fifteen cars containing anhydrous ammonia, seven lost all contents, totaling 200,00 gallons.

Approximately 8:30 p.m. on Sunday, January 20, a hopper car was raised exposing an anhydrous ammonia pool and saturated soil. The anhydrous pool in combination with the anhydrous gas escaping from the soil reacted with the air resulting in a dangerous vapor cloud. As a consequence, recovery personnel were forced to leave the hot zone and operations were suspended.

Resident visitation to the evacuated homes in the Terricita Vallejo subdivision was canceled until a stable environment can be maintained. Therefore, the timetable for residents moving back permanently has been suspended indefinitely.

Ward County Road #15 remains closed to traffic and continues to serve as a staging and access route to the derailment site.

4. RESOURCES:

LOCAL: Responders include the Minot Fire Department, the Minot Rural Fire Department, the Burlington Fire Department, the Minot Air Force Base Hazardous Material Unit, the Minot Police Department, the Ward County Sheriff's Office, the Ward County Emergency Management Office and the Canadian Pacific Railway Environmental Affairs Office.

STATE: Agencies providing support include the Governor's Office, State Radio Communications, the Department of Health, the State Fire Marshal's Office, the State Highway Patrol, the Department of Human Services, the Department of Transportation, State Veterinarian's Office, University System and the Division of Emergency Management.

FEDERAL: To date, officials from the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Minot Air Force Base, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the Federal Railroad Association (FRA) and the National Weather Service (NWS) are providing assistance.

5. VOLUNTEER ACTIONS: No change from the previous reports.
6. MAJOR ACTIONS: Initially, Zeolite will be spread over the contaminated soil to absorb the anhydrous ammonia. This process needs to be completed before further cleanup can resume.

Representatives of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Response Team, the First District Health Unit and the N.D. Department of Health continue to assist the Canadian Pacific Railway in monitoring air quality and evaluating cleanup of the contaminated soil.

Periodic meetings continue to be held by representatives of the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Federal Railroad Association (FRA) to provide a status of the investigation to other on-scene agencies.

7. ASSISTANCE NEEDED: No change from previous reports.
8. OUTSIDE HELP ON SCENE: No change from the previous reports.
9. OTHER: Appropriate state and local emergency operations plans have been implemented.

Situation Reports published by North Dakota Emergency Management are posted on the Division's Internet home page. The address is <http://www.state.nd.us/dem>.

Douglas C. Friez, State Director